

## CCJBH Juvenile Justice Workgroup Meeting

Friday, July 31, 2020

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

**Purpose:** The purpose of the meeting was to discuss strategies for highlighting and promoting best practices to serve youth in the juvenile justice system through criminal justice/behavioral health collaboration, and identify key stakeholders to achieve the mission.

### Meeting Summary

**Goal:** Determine how we can better serve youth in the juvenile justice system or improve the outcomes of youth in the juvenile justice system.

**Overview:** Youth are supervised at both the local and state levels. The juvenile justice system is greater than incarceration. One of the misconceptions is that probation determines which youth are placed in juvenile hall, etc.

The CCJBH Workgroup defined the juvenile justice system, reviewed the juvenile case processing continuum, current trends, and identified typical stakeholders in the local juvenile justice system. Through discussion, CCJBH gathered input, recommendations and identified common themes on system issues.

**Panelist Summary:** The panelist consisted of representation from the **Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health, County Behavioral Health, Chief Probation Officers of California, Education, Judicial Council, Division of Juvenile Justice, and the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission.** Members of the panel shared known best practice models and recommendations on strategies for improving the outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.

### Input from the panel:

- There has been a shift in the juvenile justice system from punitive actions to supportive actions in the school system. Juvenile justice mental health courts have played a key role in favorable outcomes as well as better communication and collaboration between probation and school systems. Prevention and early intervention is crucial in the juvenile justice system because it provides connections and supports.
- There are two systems that need to be involved with restoring youth in the juvenile justice system. One being family to support the youth and the other being larger partners such as behavioral health, probation and schools to provide services. It is important that probation officers are included as part of the treatment team to resolve and address the needs. The family or where the youth resides should also be taken into consideration and play a part in the overall system.
- The fluctuation of the youth population at DJJ can be attributed to many factors such as Prop 57 and SB 1391 (youth 13-14 years old can no longer be convicted as an adult). Such cases are making their way to DJJ causing an increase in population. The proposed transition of DJJ and developing the Youth Justice Office is currently going through the legislative process. When youth are placed at DJJ they are assessed. DJJ uses the California Youth Assessment Screening Inventory (YASI) tool. When there is an increase in risk, youth are paired with an intervention that is evidence based cognitive behavioral health therapy. The average length of stay at DJJ is 3 years.

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

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- Probation has been involved with many juvenile justice reforms and positive changes. In 2018 there were 71 thousand referrals to probation in the state of California. Sixty seven percent (67%) were diverted away from the juvenile justice system. Probation is in favor of diversion, prevention and intervention at schools, etc. The number of youth detained have decreased at local and state levels. Project Elevate Justice (SB889) is responsible for improving outcomes for youth that are involved in the juvenile justice system. Probation is a linkage between family and youth to services and supports.

Key elements of the ***Elevate Justice Act***:

Raise the age for juvenile court jurisdiction to age 19

Develop individualized treatment and rehabilitation plans based on specific risk and protective factors

Develop strategies to further limit the use of detention

Commit to expanding probation practices that eliminate racial and ethnic disparities

Advance restorative justice practices to reflect the rehabilitative philosophy of probation

**Resources:**

[Elevate Justice Act Factsheet](#)

[Elevate Justice Act Outline](#)

- More links to treatment and services provides better outcomes. SB1004 establishes prevention and early Intervention programs that highlight childhood trauma to address negative outcomes. One component is in-home programs to improve parent and family functions and another is access to services in schools for youth with childhood trauma. Not knowing where to go or how to access services is the greatest barrier.
- A significant percentage of the youth currently in the system likely fit the “8%” profile. The “8% problem” is a seminal study that was done in Orange County in the late 1980s that identified key characteristics of chronic delinquents. The study itself has been repeated a number of times in different parts of the country all with general similar findings. Those findings show that youth who enter the system who are “repeat offenders”, or chronic delinquents; 1) are first arrested before age 13, 2) have some form of family dysfunction ( single parent, parental criminality, etc.), 3) have problems in school (truancy, disengagement, academic problems, etc.), 4) delinquent peer group as friends, and 5) are involved in drug use beyond experimentation. When two or more of those characteristics are present, the youth is a high risk of chronic delinquency. This information is key in the early identification of youth who might be at high risk chronic delinquency. Identifying these youth at intake presents an opportunity to link them to appropriate services and interventions to address those factors that could lead to serious and chronic delinquency.

**Participant Input:**

- Probation officers are the first responders to youth and families. What does training look like for probation officers now and what will it look like in the future?
- Need for probation officers to be properly trained on understanding youth with intellectual disabilities and how it impacts their behaviors.
- There is a lack of residential beds and residential healthcare in the community.
- There is a small percentage of youth in the community with severe mental illness and risk factors that end up in adult corrections or remain detained at juvenile halls because they cannot be successfully placed in a home or fostercare. These youth need 1-2 years of intensive treatment. This type of treatment is not available because of resources. Studies show that if these youth are reached by the

age of 14 through the age of 17 they have a good chance returning to society successfully.

- Need for mental health and intellectual diversion programs.
- Teachers in the detention centers develop strong bonds with youth. They are advised to not communicate with the students once they are released. These youth need mentors that will commit to them and track them in a positive way such as; did they get their education, divers licenses develop job skills, make social connections, etc.
- Youth involved with the juvenile justice system excel in extracurricular activities. These services or classes are provided by volunteers. There needs to be resources put into these programs to help them to stay on track and engaged.
- Focus more on justice involved youth's strengths
- More positive youth program

#### **Recommendations:**

- **Make the focus of decreasing risk, acknowledging strengths and increase life skills, education, job skills, social connections a higher priority.**
- **Assessments should be required before youth reach the juvenile justice system.**
- **CBOs provide services and have connections to services for youth with behavioral health needs paid for by MHSA funding. It is important for probation officers to connect with CBOs especially during these times of COVID-19 in partnership to link youth that are in need to resources.**
- **Youth with intellectual disabilities are underdiagnosed. There is a high number of these youth placed in fostercare. It is recommended that fostercare youth be assessed for intellectual disabilities and mental health.**
- **More resources for programs, classes, etc, that resonate with justice involved youth with behavioral health needs.**
- **More resources put into support groups and peer mentorship.**
- **Include youth and families in solutions.**
- **Effective interventions and programs to consider:**
  - **Positive Youth Justice Model.** The PJY model emphasizes a focus on youth strengths as well as risk factors and is consistent with the “parens patriae” philosophy of the juvenile court. The parens patriae philosophy calls for the juvenile court to act as a “parent” and in the best interest of youth in the system.
  - **Juvenile Wraparound.** Juvenile Wraparound involves a multidisciplinary approach that focuses on building strengths, promoting success and building permanency at home and in the community. The approach specifically targets youth who have complex, multifaceted needs, including acute mental health diagnosis, and other Behavioral Health needs.

Wraparound teams typically include, a wraparound rehabilitation counselor, a probation officer, therapist, parent partner, and youth partner.

- **Crossover Youth Practice Model.** CYPM involves a multi-agency (Social services- Probation) model that targets the needs of youth who might be involved or have histories in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. A primary goal is to reduce involvement in the juvenile justice system in a manner that is consistent with community safety, the youth's needs and the best interest of the youth. It may include dual jurisdiction status (when the youth is concurrently served in both the child welfare and juvenile justice system) and a collaborative assessment process where the youth's priority needs are identified, and then a collaborative plan is developed to best serve the youth.